

# Horticulture Tips

## December 2004

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service  
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources  
Oklahoma State University

### GARDEN TIPS FOR DECEMBER!

*David Hillock*

#### Lawn & Turf

- ❖ Remove leaves from cool-season grasses or mow with a mulching mower. (F-6420)
- ❖ Continue mowing cool-season lawns on a regular basis. (F-6420)
- ❖ Continue to control broadleaf weeds in well-established warm or cool-season lawns with a post-emergent broadleaf weed killer. (F-6421)

#### Trees & Shrubs

- ❖ Select a freshly cut Christmas tree. Make a new cut prior to placing in tree stand. Add water daily.
- ❖ Live Christmas trees are a wise investment, as they become permanent additions to the landscape after the holidays.
- ❖ Light prunings of evergreens can be used for holiday decorations. Be careful with sap that can mar surfaces.

#### Flowers

- ❖ Apply winter mulch to protect rose bush bud unions and other perennials. Wait until after several early freezes or you will give insects a good place to winter.
- ❖ Poinsettias must have at least six hours of bright, indirect light daily. Keep plants away from drafts.

#### Fruits & Nuts

- ❖ Cover strawberry plants with a mulch about 3-4 inches thick if plants are prone to winter injury.
- ❖ Wait to prune fruit trees until late February or March.

#### General

- ❖ Keep all plants watered during dry conditions even though some may be dormant.
- ❖ Irrigate all plantings at least 24 hours before hard-freezing weather if soil is dry. (F-6404)
- ❖ Order gardening supplies for next season.
- ❖ Now is a great time to design and make structural improvements in your garden and landscape.
- ❖ Send for mail-order catalogs if you are not already on their mailing lists.
- ❖ Christmas gift ideas for the gardener might include tools, garden books, magazine subscriptions, *Oklahoma Gardening* educational tapes or membership to Oklahoma Botanical Garden & Arboretum.
- ❖ Clean and fill bird feeders.
- ❖ Make sure indoor plants are receiving enough light, or set up an indoor fluorescent plant light.

- ❖ Till garden plots without a cover crop to further expose garden pests to harsh winter conditions.
- ❖ Visit your county office to obtain gardening fact sheets for the new gardening season.
- ❖ Join a horticulture, plant or urban forestry society and support community "greening" or "beautification" projects.
- ❖ Review your garden records so you can correct past mistakes. Purchase a new gardening journal or calendar to keep the New Year's gardening records.

## **GARDEN TIPS FOR JANUARY!**

*David Hillock*

- ❖ If precipitation has been deficient (1" of snow = ~ 1/10" of water), water lawns, trees and shrubs, especially broadleaf and narrowleaf evergreens. Double check moisture in protected or raised planters.
- ❖ Check on supplies of pesticides. Secure a copy of current recommendations and post them in a convenient place. Dilution and quantity tables are also useful.
- ❖ If you did not treat young pines for tip borers in November, do so before March.
- ❖ Check that gardening tools and equipment are in good repair—sharpen, paint, and repair mowers, edgers, sprayers and dusters.
- ❖ Inspect your irrigation system and replace worn or broken parts.
- ❖ Control overwintering insects on deciduous trees or shrubs with dormant oil sprays applied when the temperature is above 40°F in late fall and winter. Do not use "dormant" oils on evergreens. (F-7306)
- ❖ A product containing glyphosate plus a postemergent broadleaf herbicide can be used on dormant bermudagrass in January or February when temperatures are above 50°F for winter weed control. (F-6421)

## **Diazinon Sales**

*David Hillock*

EPA has issued a notice to remind retailers of a December 31, 2004, stop-sale date for all outdoor diazinon home, lawn and garden products. It will be unlawful to sell diazinon outdoor non-agricultural use products in the United States after the end of this year. This is part of an agreement between EPA and diazinon registrants to phase out and eliminate all residential uses of the insecticide diazinon. Discontinuing diazinon use in home, lawn and garden care is part of EPA's ongoing effort under the 1996 Food Quality Protection Act to reduce the risk of pesticides, especially to children. Diazinon registrants are offering a "buy back" program to assist with removing these products from the market and preventing further sale. Retailers should make all possible efforts to sell their diazinon products back to the manufacturers by March 31, 2005. Consumers may continue to use diazinon residential products according to label directions and precautions. If consumers choose to discontinue use, they should contact their state or local hazardous waste disposal program or local hazardous waste collection service for information on proper disposal. Consumers are advised not to dispose of pesticides in sinks, toilets, storm drains or any body of water. The organophosphate pesticide, diazinon, has been one of the most widely

used insecticides in the United States for household lawn and garden pest control, as well as for indoor residential treatments. All indoor use product registrations have been cancelled and retail sale ended on December 31, 2002. More information on diazinon is available at:

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/op/diazinon.htm>. (EPA Pesticide Programs Update, October 1, 2004).

## **Poinsettia Information**

*David Hillock*

### Newly Revised Poinsettia Fact Sheet

We have recently revised fact sheet F-6413 Poinsettia Care. The newest feature of this fact sheet is the color pictures showing some of the newer poinsettia cultivars. The revised copy is now available via the Print-on-Demand-System and [www.osuextra.com](http://www.osuextra.com). The fact sheet, of course, covers how to properly select and maintain your poinsettia for long lasting beauty during the holiday season. Also included are some tips on how get one to reflower next year if you are up to a challenge.

### Poinsettias Not Poisonous

Recent research has shown that poinsettias are not poisonous, but the plants are intended solely for ornamental purposes. Some people are allergic to the milky sap and may develop a rash when exposed to the sap. Avoid breaking the leaves and stems which releases the sap. It is wise to keep any houseplant out of the reach of small children and pets.

## **Oklahoma Grown Christmas Trees**

*David Hillock*

The best way to ensure that you are getting a fresh Christmas tree is to buy one directly from one of the many Christmas tree farms in Oklahoma. Each one offers a different experience but one that is always a fun and memorable one for the family. Some of the farms offer more than just Christmas trees – wreaths, garland, table decorations and gifts may be available too. To make the experience more memorable some also offer free hot cider, hot chocolate, coloring books and candy canes as well as children's activities.

A free marketing directory produced by the Oklahoma Christmas Tree Association shows 13 different farms across the state in 2004. The 2004 marketing directory lists members of the Oklahoma Christmas Tree Association with trees for sale this holiday season. These Oklahoma grown trees are beautiful fresh green Christmas trees which were carefully planted and nurtured for years specifically for you this Christmas.

For more information about Oklahoma Christmas trees go to [www.okchristmastrees.com](http://www.okchristmastrees.com) or call 405-527-5873 or 918-272-9445.

## **Christmas Cactus**

*David Hillock*

Next to poinsettias the Christmas cactus can be a popular houseplant for the holidays. In general they are easy to grow and can live for a long time with the proper care. Native to the tropics they are used to growing in the canopies of trees and receiving moderate amounts of moisture. Thus, a medium light intensity and a soil high in organic matter are suggested. Do not allow the plant to dry out, water when the soil surface begins to feel dry. The plant may be kept drier in autumn. Any houseplant fertilizer may be used according to label directions.

Like poinsettias they have special requirements to get them to bloom. Cool temperatures or long nights are required to induce blooming. The plants bloom when given night temperatures near 55 degrees and day temperatures below 65 degrees. Plants will not flower at temperatures above 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

Flowering is related to day length and night temperatures. No research has supported the rumor that a "dry down" period induces flowering. The temperature range for flower bud development is 55 to 65 degrees for a six week period. If temperatures remain in this range they will develop buds regardless of day length. If temperatures get above that range, the plant will need at least 12 to 14 hours of uninterrupted darkness each night. This can be done by placing them in a completely dark room or covering them for the recommended time, or longer, each night with a dark piece of cloth. Or just keep the plants in total darkness like a closet till buds develop. For holiday blooms this usually means in late September to mid-October.

During flower bud formation, stop fertilizing and only water enough to keep the leaves from becoming shriveled. Once buds do form then you can keep the plant in normal light and temperatures. Keep it evenly moist and fertilize every other week with a diluted fertilizer solution. Bud drop may occur due to over or under watering or being placed in drafty areas.

A Christmas cactus plant will live for a long time in the same pot if proper soil was used originally and if the plant is fertilized and watered regularly. If the plant becomes top-heavy or root bound, move it to a larger pot.

### **The ideal schedule of a Christmas Cactus**

**January** - Flowering.

**February to March** - Resting (55 degrees, infrequent watering).

**April to May** - Water thoroughly when potting mix begins to dry out.

**June to August** - Place outdoors in a shady spot.

**September to October** - Plant prepares to flower. Reduce length daylight hours. Keep on the dry side and cool (55 to 65 degrees F) until flower buds form. Then increase water and temperature.

**November to December** - Flowering. Water normally. Temperature no less than 55 degrees F.

## **Grape and Pecan Information**

*Becky Carroll*

### Pruning Questions

For grape and peach producers, pruning should be delayed until spring. Pruning early in the winter can make the vines or trees more susceptible to freeze injury. Adjustments can be made to accommodate freeze injury and crop load issues after bloom for peaches and bud surveys can detect grape vine cold damage before pruning. If damage is visible, leave more wood on vines or trees.

### Pecan Thinning Decisions

As native pecan growers are harvesting the large crop this year, they should be marking trees that are not productive, or trees with undesirable nut shape or quality for possible tree thinning to reduce overcrowding in native groves. A spray paint mark each year on the trunk of a producing tree can help thinning decisions when the crop is no longer in the orchard. A tree with many consecutive marks will be left while the trees without marks should be chosen first for elimination.

### Grape and Pecan Management Courses to Be Offered

The Grape and Pecan Management Courses are being offered again this next year. These two classes meet one afternoon a month through the year to give growers or potential growers an opportunity to have classroom and hands on experience with monthly management issues for grapes or pecans. These classes are ideal for someone considering starting a vineyard or orchard and also meet the needs of someone already in the business. Attached are the brochures and registration material for each course.

### Oklahoma Grape Growers and Wine Makers (OGGWMA) Annual Meeting

The OGGWMA will meet on January 15-16, 2005 at the Embassy Suites on Meridian in Oklahoma City. More details about the meeting will be available on the web site at a later date. The web site is located at <http://www.oklahomawines.org>.

## **December Weather May Still Offer Opportunity for Broadleaf Weed Control**

*Dennis Martin*

Mild fall temperatures and abundant rainfall in most of Oklahoma has allowed a large number of winter annual broadleaf weeds to emerge in both cool and warm-season lawns. Commonly seen weeds include the broadleaves: henbit and common chickweed and the grasses: annual bluegrass, downy brome and cheat.

Home consumers can achieve successful early post-emergent control of the broadleaf weeds in cool or warm-season turf in October through early December in most years. The feature time periods that will still allow post-emergent broadleaf herbicides to be effective are spray applications made when daytime highs will be at least in the upper 50s or low 60s for a 4 to 5 consecutive period.

Low temperatures reduce the effectiveness of broadleaf post-emergent herbicides. Commercial/Professional herbicide applicators have access to herbicide formulations that remain effective under low temperatures whereas the products available to the home consumer are less effective under cool conditions. Appropriate broadleaf post-emergent herbicides for the home consumer include Weed-B-Gone or Trimec. These sprayable post-emergent herbicide products contain 2,4-D; MCPP and dicamba in an amine salt form. Use of broadleaf post-emergent herbicides in December over fall overseeded cool-season lawns can result in grass injury due the immature seedlings being less tolerant of herbicide. Therefore, a judgment call must be made as to the value of broadleaf weed control at this time versus the risk of injuring young fescue, bluegrass or ryegrass plants. Remember to read and follow all label directions when working with pesticides.

Neither of the two broadleaf post-emergent herbicides mentioned above control the winter annual grasses. Winter annual grassy weeds can be controlled post-emergent in dormant bermudagrass with a glyphosate product in late January through early March (depending upon the environmental conditions in an individual year). Products containing glyphosate include Kleen-up and Roundup products. Many different concentrations and formulations are available and the consumer assumes responsibility for reading the product label to determine if the product under consideration is appropriate for the job. Do not use glyphosate products for post-emergent grassy weed control in any cool-season perennial grass or over centipedegrass, buffalograss, St. Augustinegrass or zoysiagrass. Glyphosate applications for winter annual weedy grasses also kill some winter annual broadleaves, but a more effective control program can be made by tank mixing glyphosate and a broadleaf weed killer.

If the consumer is uncomfortable with any aspect of the weed control program, they can be assured that Oklahoma has many capable commercial/professional lawn care applicators/operators ready to control weeds for a fair and competitive fee.

## **Are Ornamental Sweet Potatoes Edible?**

*David Hillock*

Recently we have received a number of calls concerning the ornamental sweet potato. At the end of the year many people are quite surprised to see that large tubers have formed on their plants. When first purchased and transplanted, these tubers were probably not present. That is because the plant was probably started from a "slip," the typical way to propagate sweet potatoes. As the common name indicates, these are true sweet potatoes and though the foliage is quite ornamental, the tubers formed are much like those grown for eating. In fact the ornamental sweet potato tuber is edible. However, the eating quality and taste of the ornamental sweet potato tuber may not be the same as those bred and sold for eating. I have not tried them personally, and don't know that I really want to, but I have heard rumors that they are okay. If you are not really into eating them as I am not, you can at least save the tubers, storing them in a cool, dark and dry area and use them for new starts next spring.

## Sudden Oak Death

*Mike Schnelle*

Sudden Oak Death (SOD) is a disease from the causal agent *Phytophthora ramorum*, a type of fungus. Besides this disease causing problems in European nurseries, in the United States both our forests and nurseries (particularly on the West Coast) are being affected. Although oak is mentioned in the disease's common name, many other ornamental plants are affected. To date, at least 62 ornamentals are known to be susceptible with the list constantly being updated and expanded as scientists better understand this malady. In Oklahoma nurseries, Pieris, Honeysuckle, Rhododendron, Viburnum, Oak, Camellia and others need to be monitored. Certain out-of-state nurseries have shipped both infected Pieris and Camellia this summer. However, both were intercepted keeping Oklahoma nurseries and garden centers SOD-free to date.

Faculty from the Departments of Entomology and Plant Pathology as well as Horticulture and Landscape Architecture have been working on the eventuality of SOD since 2001. Consumers should know that symptoms range from entire plants wilting to more subtle symptoms such as leaf and twig dieback. Furthermore, some plants can harbor the disease without manifesting noticeable symptoms. Currently, Oklahoma Master Gardeners are receiving training to serve as first detectors for the State of Oklahoma. Should any nursery, garden center professional or consumer detect a potentially infected plant, they may contact Brian Olson, Plant Disease Diagnostician, at the Plant Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in Stillwater. Brian may be reached at 405-744-9961 or [olsonb@okstate.edu](mailto:olsonb@okstate.edu). **It is important to note that OSU's Digital Diagnostic Services will not work for this disease.** Concerned individuals may periodically check the following website to stay apprised of SOD updates. See <http://entopl.okstate.edu/users/svb/sod>.

## Beetle Grubs

*Steve Owens*

Two types of beetle larvae (grubs) that gardeners may find in their gardens during fall or spring are the Green June Beetle and the common brown May/June Beetle. There are marked differences between the two. The Green June Beetle grub is larger, about 3 to 4 times the size of the other. Another major difference is its mode of transportation. The large Green June Beetle grub crawls on its back. It undulates and ripples its way across the ground. The brown June Beetle crawls like most insects, with its front feet, dragging the rest of its body along.

Another huge difference between the two is their ability to do damage in the landscape. The Green June Beetle grubs do no damage to plants or turf in this juvenile state. They feed only on organic matter that is in the soil, piled on the surface or in our compost bins. However, once they mature into a large greenish beetle they can become problematic, especially where fruit trees are concerned. The adult Green June Beetle has a bump or horn-like protrusion on its nose that it uses to gouge the outer skin of ripening fruit. It then feeds on the fruit flesh inside. They can be found in large numbers feeding inside a single apple. They also feed on pears, peaches, plums, blackberries and grapes.

The common brown May/June Beetle does very little damage as an adult, but its larval stage known as the white grub, can be a problem in turf. The white grubs can damage turfgrass by feeding on its roots. They are usually not a problem unless they are present in high numbers. If seven or more grubs are found in a one foot by one foot section of soil, the lawn can be significantly damaged requiring treatment.

## **24th Annual Horticulture Industry Show**

The Annual Oklahoma & Arkansas Horticulture Industries Show will be held January 14-15, 2005 at the Holiday Inn Civic Center in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The preregistration form and conference flyer are in an attached pdf file.

The show involves two days of educational programs and trade show activities for people with horticultural interests in Oklahoma, Arkansas and surrounding states. This year's theme is "Safe and Secure Food Begins on the Farm." Over 500 are expected to be in attendance along with over 35 exhibitors of equipment, supplies and services.

The General Session begins at 9:00 a.m. both January 14 and 15 and will feature topics of general interest. Six horticultural commodity groups will offer educational sessions concurrently beginning at 10:30 a.m. each day. Program topics will be for existing producers, new producers and service providers. Do not miss this show if you are currently involved in or considering production, value added and marketing of fruits, vegetables, herbs, Christmas trees, sustainable farming and master gardener/public horticulture.

For more information, contact Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, OSU at 405-744-6460, email: [raycam@dasnr.okstate.edu](mailto:raycam@dasnr.okstate.edu) or Department of Horticulture, University of Arkansas at 479-575-2639, email: [crander@uark.edu](mailto:crander@uark.edu).

Program information and the preregistration form can be found at the OSU Horticulture and Landscape Architecture web page [www.hortla.okstate.edu](http://www.hortla.okstate.edu) under "Events" and at the University of Arkansas Department of Horticulture web page [www.uark.edu/ArkHort/](http://www.uark.edu/ArkHort/).

## **Annual OK-AR Turfgrass Management Short Course**

*Dennis Martin*

The Fifth Annual Oklahoma-Arkansas Turfgrass Management Short Course will be offered on January 11 and 12, 2005 in Little Rock, Arkansas.

This is an intensive 2-day introductory level turfgrass management short course. It is designed specifically to benefit turfgrass managers in lawn, grounds and athletic fields care that have not had a formal turf management course. It is not an advanced course, so it is very suitable to those new to the turf management industry.



The course emphasizes sound research-based fundamentals of the "why" behind the "how" turf is cared for in Arkansas and Oklahoma. Topics are taught class room style and cover the fundamentals of: turf ID, selection, establishment, fertilization, mowing, irrigation, aeration, dethatching and pest management. The course is a cooperative effort among the turf science faculty at the University of Arkansas and Oklahoma State University.

Participants will receive: Turf short course manual, lunch on both days, resourceful education, Certificate of Attendance, opportunity to network with other professionals, break refreshments and parking.

This course does not count towards degree credit or class work at either the University of Arkansas or Oklahoma State University. It is provided as an educational benefit to further professional career development of course attendees and help attendees to get the most out of their educational programming when attending the Annual Arkansas and Oklahoma Turfgrass Conferences.

As in the past, the short course has been submitted for review by the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry with a request for consideration of 5 CEUs in Categories 3a (Outdoor Ornamentals & Turf) as well as Category 10 (Demonstration & Research).

The course is limited to 75 pre-registered participants total and no walk-in registration will be accepted. To register, send a check for \$125 made out to the Golf Course Supt. Assoc. of Arkansas and mail to: GCSAA, 700 Bryant Meadows Drive, Bryant, AR 72022. If you have questions, please contact Dr. John Boyd at 501-671-2224 or email at [jboyd@uaex.edu](mailto:jboyd@uaex.edu). A copy of the short course flyer is attached in both pdf and MS Word formats.

## **Oklahoma Cucurbit Production and Marketing Educational Meeting**

Jim Shrefler

The 2004 Oklahoma Cucurbit meeting is being planned to address a variety of issues that should benefit commercial growers, home gardeners and Extension Educators alike. Among this year's guest speakers are Dr. Charles Marr, Vegetable Specialist, Kansas State University, who will offer presentations on experience in Kansas with pumpkin production and pest management. Chris Kirby, Urban Harvest Director, Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, will discuss new opportunities for produce marketing in Oklahoma. Mark Arney, Director, National Watermelon Promotion Board, will provide an update of watermelon promotion and latest information on benefits of this Oklahoma tradition. Additional topics will include cucurbit pest and disease management, production of specialty melons, health benefits of cucurbits and new developments in Oklahoma Mesonet weather resources for vegetable producers.

The meeting will be held December 9 at the Fairgrounds in Chickasha. It will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. and will include a noon meal. To receive a brochure with additional meeting details call 580-889-7343. A brochure can also be requested by sending an email request to [jshrefler-okstate@lane-ag.org](mailto:jshrefler-okstate@lane-ag.org). Meeting information is posted at [www.lane-ag.org](http://www.lane-ag.org).

## Oklahoma State Pecan Show 2004

Becky Carroll

*This year looks to be a bumper crop for pecans. Be sure to get the word out to everyone to enter their best pecans in the state show this year. There will not be any qualifying regional or district pecan shows this year. However, some county/area shows will be held at the discretion of the County Extension Educator. Growers are encouraged to participate in county shows if available. Winning entries from county shows will be sent to the state show. If no county/area show is available, growers may enter pecans directly by sending samples to Becky Carroll, 360 Ag Hall, OSU, Stillwater, OK 74078. Samples should arrive by January 10, 2005.*

Samples should be entered in a sealed plastic or paper bag. Label the bag on the outside and place a label inside the bag. Information should include exhibitors name and address, county, and type of pecan entered. Be sure to follow the guidelines that are listed below before sending entries.

A few helpful hints: Take the time to select pecans that are all the same cultivar or same size and shape natives – don't send mixed pecans. Select uniform, clean, uncracked pecans. Presentation can make the difference between two very similar samples. Make sure to send 2 pounds of pecans in a labeled and sealed bag.

### General Rules and Guidelines

- All entries must be grown in Oklahoma during the current season.
- Each entry shall consist of two pounds of nuts.
- Entries deemed unworthy by the judges will not compete for awards.
- Label each entry as to exhibitor's name, address and cultivar of nuts. If more than one native (seedling) pecan exhibit is made, identify the nuts from separate trees by numbers. Only one exhibit of each cultivar or native tree may be entered by one individual.
- Each entry will compete in one of the following 28 classes:

- |             |                       |                     |
|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Apache   | 12. Maramec           | 23. Success         |
| 2. Barton   | 13. Mohawk            | 24. Western         |
| 3. Burkett  | 14. Pawnee            | 25. Wichita         |
| 4. Cheyenne | 15. Peruque           | 26. Other Cultivars |
| 5. Choctaw  | 16. SanSaba Improved  | 27. Large-Native    |
| 6. Comanche | 17. Schley (eastern)  | (seedling)          |
| 7. Graking  | 18. Shawnee           | 28. Small-Native    |
| 8. Gratex   | 19. Shoshoni          | (seedling)          |
| 9. Kanza    | 20. Sioux             |                     |
| 10. Kiowa   | 21. Squirrels Delight |                     |
| 11. Mahan   | 22. Stuart            |                     |

- Each grower is allowed to participate at one county show of his or her choice.
- Each grower is allowed to enter one entry in each show class with the exception of Class 26 (Other Cultivars), Class 27 (Large-seedling) and Class 28 (Small- seedling).
- Each grower may enter one entry from each native (seedling) tree.
- Entries should be shipped or mailed to arrive at the show at least one day prior to the deadline.
- County pecan shows will not be affected by these rules and procedures.
- Only first and second place winners in each class of each county/area show will be eligible to compete in the State Pecan Show. Following each county show, eligible entries will be placed in cold storage, and judged before the Oklahoma Pecan Growers Annual Meeting. At that time, the winning entries will be displayed with awards and recognitions. All entries will become the property of the OPGA.
- First and second place winners in each class at the State Pecan Show will receive ribbons.
- State Pecan Show Special Awards – Trophies will be awarded for the largest pecan entry, the entry having the highest kernel percentage, the champion native and the best entry of the show.
- If a qualifying show is not available, growers may submit entries in accordance with these guidelines directly to the State Show. Entries in the state show must be received by January 10, 2005 at the following address:

Oklahoma State University  
 Department of Horticulture & LA  
 Attn: Becky Carroll  
 360 Ag Hall  
 Stillwater, OK 74078

## **Southern Region IPM Center**

*Jim Shrefler*

You may have heard mention of it but you may not know what it is all about and what it has to offer. It is the Southern Region IPM Center, of which Oklahoma is a member state. The following, taken from the Center's Web page, explains its background.

In September 2000, the USDA funded the creation of a nationwide pest management information network established to respond quickly to information needs in both the public and private sectors. Four Regional Pest Management Centers (PMCs) will help USDA and its partner institutions identify, prioritize, and coordinate a national pest management research, extension, and education program to be implemented on a regional basis.

The Centers' most basic function is to develop and maintain a pest management information network that will contribute to environmentally and economically sound pest management decisions. The network serves two major purposes: to facilitate communication among key groups of people and to provide these groups with broad access to pest management information.

Communications channels will be effective only if all parties can consistently access the same reliable information. Research-based information is essential to our ability to make sound pest management decisions in any context, from a backyard garden to national regulatory offices. PMCs, working with the support of USDA, are building a comprehensive database that eventually will hold all kinds of scientifically tested pest management information. This database will be available on the World Wide Web for use by everyone.

Funding for the national network of Pest Management Centers was authorized by Section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998. As the result of a second competitive process in 2003, four IPM Centers across the United States were again funded in FY 2003, with the Southern Region Center located at the NSF Center for IPM at North Carolina State University

The web site for the Southern Region Center is [www.sripmc.org](http://www.sripmc.org). The site has a mix of information targeted to a variety of groups. Although much of it may not be of direct interest to all, everyone involved in agriculture will certainly find portions of the site that are of value. As an example, if you want learn about pest management of a particular crop in a particular state, select "Crop Profiles". You will be able to search to see what is being done for pest control with that crop in the state you select. The "Data Sources" section is another valuable resource. Here you can find links to many pesticide and crop production related data bases that offer a wealth of information. Check it out!

## **Upcoming Horticulture Events**

### **24th Annual Arkansas/Oklahoma Horticulture Industries Show**

"Safe and Secure Food Begins on the Farm"

January 14-15, 2005, Fort Smith, Arkansas – Holiday Inn Civic Center

For more information contact Donna Dollins at [donna.dollins@okstate.edu](mailto:donna.dollins@okstate.edu) or 405-744-6460.

### **Annual OK-AR Turfgrass Management Short Course**

January 11-12, 2005, Little Rock, Arkansas

For more information contact Dr. John Boyd at 501-671-2224 or email at [jboyd@uaex.edu](mailto:jboyd@uaex.edu).

### **Oklahoma Gardening Summer Gardenfest**

June 11, 2005, OSU Botanical Gardens, Stillwater, Oklahoma

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or [stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu](mailto:stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu).

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